

## THRILLS

By MRS. MARY POWER.

1921, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.

Avis turned the leaves of the brilliantly illustrated booklets listlessly. The scenic glory of the mountains lured her, so did the sandy beaches. But the prices—exorbitant. One must needs be a millionaire to put up at either place.

Anyway she would need a stunning new wardrobe—she would go shopping.

She bowed coldly to the little woman lodger she had passed on the stairs.

Miss Miller, with a shy, timid smile, wished, pathetically she was as young and pretty as the other, as she turned to watch Avis tripping lightly over the dingy stairs.

Miss Miller couldn't have been a day over thirty-five, although she looked fifty. Avis herself was just turning thirty.

Dusk had settled when Avis returned, her arms full of bundles. Unlike most women, her shopping expedition had held her for no thrills.

There came a timid knock at the door, the handle turned, and Miss Miller entered shyly.

"Oh, Miss Burroughs. I want you to read this letter from my sister Delle. Here's a letter for you, too, came in my mail by mistake. Delle's going to be a June bride," she gasped. "I'm all a-tremble. I suppose it sounds silly that I should feel so queerly, only Delle's the only sister I ever had and the baby of the family." She looked up suddenly, her face aglow, her tired eyes sparkling.

Avis listened politely. Miss Miller was such a bore. What did she care about—June brides—

"I haven't seen Delle since she was a baby. My mother died and we were separated. I've kept track of her though. She wants I should come and see her married," Miss Miller's voice shook a trifle. "Oh, Miss Avis—"

Avis looked surprised. Sentiment in that drab little soul—of all things! "Well, and why not?" she said.

"Oh, my dear, it's out of the question," Miss Miller said in a shocked voice. "It'd cost heaps—she lives out in Kansas way, and I couldn't ever get enough money. I could write and ask Delle to send me the account in the newspapers," her voice broke suddenly.

Avis felt a funny little tug inside of her.

"Miss Miller," she found herself saying, and experienced a throb of happiness that almost took her breath away. "Suppose someone should offer you—enough money—to take you there and back, and furnish you with the necessary frills, and even a beautiful present for Delle—"

"Oh, my gracious," Miss Miller flopped into a chair with a nervous little laugh. "I suppose it does seem like a joke, but Delle you see was a baby, and—and—" She was crying quietly into a thin little lace handkerchief.

"Joke—your grandmother!" Avis said roughly.

"See," she pointed to the array of dainty things upon the bed. "Some of those I intended to give away," she fibbed deliberately, "and if you won't accept the money for your fare, tactfully, 'I'll lend it to you, until you're able to pay it back. There's a train at midnight.'"

Miss Miller was speechless.

"You've two hours to pack and get to the terminal," Avis reminded. Miss Miller found herself being escorted across the hall, gray suede pumps clutched in one thin hand, a gray frock flung across a shaky arm.

Miss Miller never could tell you what really took place in the next hour or so.

What she never knew, however, was that as soon as she was out of sight, Avis flew up the stairs to her room and threw herself into a chair with a hysterical moan. She felt frightfully old and alone.

"A home, a sister—add a June wedding—all for Miss Miller—fancy!" said Avis, to nobody in particular, and then her eyes fell on the letter Miss Miller had brought along with Delle's. Delle she broke the seal.

"Avis, my love," the letter ran, "we are leaving for Riverway Court on Friday. Uncle Mart and me. Would you care to accompany us, as you did four years ago? We'll come to the city after you Wednesday. And, oh, Avis, I almost forgot to tell you that that good-looking Dee Kennedy, whom you played those wonderful tennis matches with that summer—remember?—has returned from service and is going with us. It may please you to know (Avis drew a long breath before she continued greedily) that he has asked for you any number of times. He seems awfully interested in your whereabouts, and acts as if he were waiting on pins and needles until we hear from you.

"Suspicious! If I thought there was any hope I'd encourage him. Oh, do you know, dear, he was real peeved concerning that story about his paying close attention to that little French girl over there. Said, gruffly, he saw any amount of pretty girls but—Isn't that like Dee? Lovingly.

COUSIN LOLITA.

"P. S.—Uncle Mart says I'm to forward the inclosed check. You might need to purchase a few frills for the trip. Presume the city has furnished plenty of thrills."

Avis smiled. She'd had one, anyway. Miss Miller's pinched face stared at her from the shadowy recesses of the hall. Thrills and frills—some combination! And Avis grinned like a girl in her teens.

## WOLF'S CLOTHING

By VERA T. ROGERS.

1921, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.

They were discussing the new office manager—that is, Rida and Lillian were. Kath was the listening portion of the trio. She sat in the bright sunlight streaming through the broad window, without a blink of her heavily-lidded sepia-brown eyes. Her dimpled fingers played a lazy tattoo on the typewriter before her. Once she turned her head, like a languid sunflower, toward the twittering pair, and that was all.

The new man had disappeared for a few moments. In the meantime he was "catching it" from the office.

"What do you think of him, Kath?" "Nifty little goldie-brown mustache, eh, Kath?"

"Let Kath alone. Can't you see she's asleep—like a sweet Persian tabby in the sun?"

"A peach! An Adonis, isn't he, Kath?" "Adonids? You've said it!" shouted "Sour Grapes" from his high stool.

"Didn't you just love the way he romped in with his raccoon coat and motor goggles?" gurgled Lillian.

Kath spoke for the first time that day: "Wolf's clothing!" Her tapping preserved its steady, lazy rhythm.

"Woof! Woof!" Another "high stool" took up the cry.

"That's not a wolf—it's a bear!" "He's a bear—he's a bear," danced Rida toward the water tank.

"What did you mean by 'wolf's clothing,' Kath?"

"She meant a sheep in wolf's clothing. He's a sheep—he's a sheep," warbled "Sour Grapes," saving Kath an answer.

Every high stool and swivel creaked under its weight of assiduous attention to business when Authority returned. The detail ran smoothly, for the force, in spite of spirits' overhills, was a competent one. Sylvester Rand made vigorous use of his handkerchief when he entered. His keen gray eyes were dancing as they sought the floor. As a matter of fact he had heard every word—learned in the space of three minutes that he grew on trees, was a Greek god and was that most pitiful of objects—a sheep in wolf's clothing. He stepped to Kath's desk.

"Miss Berry, will you remain after 5 this evening. I want to discuss something." And the office listened to a man. Kath raised inquiring eyes, which had grown a little wilder, and nodded.

At 5:15 the company's outer office door opened and a tall, slender brunette, enveloped in furs, entered. Her deep blue eyes, in contrast to her dark hair, were alive and searching. Her glance fell upon the waiting Kath, who, dressed for the street, was seated before her covered up typewriter.

"Is Mr. Rand here?" asked the brunette sweetly.

The disgruntled one moved a languid hand toward the inner office, the door of which was slightly ajar.

After a hesitant moment the newcomer seated herself.

Then Rand hurried out from the inner office and walked straight to Kath, without once glancing at the newcomer.

"Ahem!" He drew another desk chair as close as possible to the one which held the sullen one, reached out and seized one of her chubby hands in a firm grip.

"Ahem! Now, my dear—" he began. Kath's heavily-lidded eyes, widened to their fullest and traveled past his shoulder to the other woman who was slowly rising from her seat. Then Rand also turned and looked. Releasing the hand he held he rose to his feet, turned his back to Kath and faced the tall, slender one with a copious wink. In true "movie" fashion he registered his confession and guilt.

"Ah—er—how do you do? Had no idea—"

Then he turned: "Ah—some other time, Miss Berry—" But Kath's chair was empty. On the street floor Rida and Lillian waited. They pounced upon Kath as she emerged from the elevator.

"Tell us—what did he want to see you about?"

"Girls—the shaken one was no longer chary of speech—"take it from me that man's a wolf clear through—if his wife hadn't happened in—"

Up in the office a pair of young people had fallen into swivel chairs, weak from laughter.

"A peach—an Adonis is one thing, Cousin Sue; but a 'sheep' is a bird of another complexion. That girl doesn't talk much, which makes her a sort of oracle around the office. I may have to spend the rest of my life here and I'm not going to begin as a sheep—in wolf's clothing—so I staged the little affair on the spur of the moment, knowing you would be along to help me out. Tomorrow, I'll be an out-and-out wolf." The mild Sylvester threw out his chest, flung on the raccoon coat and pretended to leap savagely at his cousin.

They went out to dinner together. Sue and this boy-man-wolf cousin of hers. In the soft glow of the table lamp her eyes were very gentle, warm and maternal as she studied him. Tomorrow he would be scorned unmercifully by the employees of the company. But that was as nothing to being thought a sheep—men were like that.

He looked up then and held her blushing gaze with masterful eyes.

"This time, Sue, you're going to accept me."

Anyhow, that's how modest Sylvester, now vice-president of the company, became a wolf—in State street.

## SMART CHILDREN

By MARY LOUISE CORMIER.

1921, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.

"I say, pater, can you let me have \$50 on account?" There was the usual solicitous expression on William Sylvester's young face as he made his familiar request. Old John Pennynickie dropped his copy of the Evening Gazette and his mild gray eyes looked out troublously at the boy from behind a barricade of shabby, misshapen spectacles.

"You haven't spent all of your allowance this early, Will?" he demanded. "Why, when I was your age an allowance like that would keep me in funds for a year."

"But, pater, this is the Twentieth century!" William Sylvester's stock was delivered with the open exasperation of seventeen. "Besides, in a one-horse town like Meeds, \$50 a month is barely enough to get by on—and keep up appearances, I mean!"

The boy in concluding shot an appealing sidelong glance at his mother. And that lady, whose ruling ambition was to see her children firmly and safely established "in the right class," rallied to his defense.

"Sylvester is right," she declared in the judicial tone of one used to handing down final decisions; "it is only reasonable to expect that the son of one of Meeds' leading citizens should keep up a decent front."

"I was thinking of the store," said "pater," offering a feeble defense. "I've had to sell that last lot of hardware at a loss. Business is pretty dull just now, you know."

"Business again!" Mrs. John Pennynickie's crisp voice pounced upon the word scornfully. "Do you consider business more important than your children's future? I must say, John Pennynickie—"

"Oh, all right, mother, all right," capitulated the old man hastily. Anything, he told himself, to escape another of Carrie's tongue-lashings. "You come around to the store in the morning. Will, and I'll fix you up."

"Thanks, pater," William Sylvester flashed a look of triumph in his mother's direction. Then he turned back to his father with an apologetic grin.

"I wouldn't have asked you for this," he explained, "if it wasn't for the fact that Norry and Christine are coming home next week. They'll probably bring along some of their swell friends—and, well, you know what that means, pater."

"Yes," Pater knew what it meant, well enough. Money! Each time the children came home from college he made feverish trips to the bank. He would do so again.

Norris was the first to tap the parental resources. He and a college chum were planning to establish a summer restaurant.

"Mints of money in it, pater," he confided earnestly. "All I need to start in with is about \$500. You could let me have that much, couldn't you?" Pater let him have it. No sooner was this affair concluded than Christine revealed her plan for an elaborate black and white frock.

"Just a little welcome home party," she told her father sweetly. "Please do this for me, pater, darling! And of course 'pater darling' did.

Christine's little party was a picturesque affair that cost several hundred dollars. Meeds flocked to it and enjoyed itself hugely.

The day after the black and white frock pater was knocked down by an automobile on South Main street. His family was deeply shocked.

"But I didn't suppose anything could ever happen to pater!" Christine moaned to Doctor Stanton when they went to visit Pennynickie in the Hill-side hospital.

"Oh, yes," he responded with thinly veiled sarcasm. "You know even the best machine made is subject to wear and tear. In pater's ward the children lingered about uncomfortably and blamed themselves mercilessly for the calamity. Once outside—they blamed each other. Only Carrie seemed genuinely affected by the accident."

"I'm ashamed of myself, John," she whispered to the bandaged figure on the hospital cot. "We've all been driving you like an old workhorse."

Pater reached up and patted her hand.

"It's all right, mother," he mumbled weakly. "We—we had to think of the children's future, you know. Don't worry. I'll be out of here in a week." But he was wrong. It was a whole month before he was able to leave the hospital. At home he found two letters awaiting him.

One, containing a bill, was from Christine, who was in the White Mountains, "recovering from a nervous breakdown." The other was from Norris.

"The restaurant is coming along slowly," he wrote. "Do you think you could wire an additional \$200—just to see the thing through?" Pater showed the two letters to Doctor Stanton, who had accompanied him.

"Well," commented the cynical doctor, "I guess they'll never learn. They should be ashamed of themselves."

"What for?" Pater's head shot up aggressively. A tender light flooded his gray eyes. "Christine was elected president of her class at Wellesley last term. Will made the high school eleven, too. And Norris—what a head for business that boy has! Ashamed? Not a bit of it! If I do say it myself, they're a right smart set of children!"

## FELT LIKE AN IRON BAND AROUND HEAD

This Is How Lynchburg, Va., Woman Declares Her Headaches Often Affected Her.

Everybody will read with interest the statement of Miss M. E. Woodford, 1808 Filmore St., Lynchburg, Va., who says:

"I don't believe anybody ever suffered from headaches like I did. The pains felt like an iron band was being drawn around my head and my temples would throb until I was driven almost distracted. I shudder when I think of those awful headaches. I had no appetite either."

"I owe Tanlac an everlasting debt of gratitude for entirely ridding me of those terrible headaches. My stomach has been toned up too, and everything I eat agrees with me now. Tanlac certainly brought me health and happiness."

Tanlac is sold in Hartford by Dr. L. B. Bean and by all leading druggists everywhere.

"Does it not throw a shade of bitterness into your heart," she said, "to see the trees all leafless, and to hear the wind sighing forever in mournful monotony? Does it not make you feel that there is too much that is bleak in the world?"

"No," he answered, "it really does not."

"Why?"

"Because my papa is in the coal business."

Mrs. Blunder has just received a telegram from India. "What an admirable invention the telegram is!" she exclaimed, "when you come to consider that this message has come a distance of thousands of miles, and the gum on the envelope isn't dry yet!"

She—Most people admire my mouth. Do you?

He (absent-mindedly)—I think it is simply immense!

Mrs. Worth had just learned that her colored workwoman, Aunt Dianah, had at the age of 70 married for the fourth time. "Why, Aunt Dianah," she exclaimed, "you surely haven't married again!"

"Yassum, honey, I has," was Aunt Dianah's smiling reply. "Jes' as often as de Lawd takes 'em, so will I."

Ladies Home Journal.

The head of one of the government scientific bureaus at Washington felt somewhat flattered at receiving one day a letter from a gentleman in the West, asking him to send a copy of his report. The scientist replied promptly, asking to which particular report his correspondent referred.

The answer came: "Am not particular which one you send. I want it for a scrapbook."—Country Gentleman.

Lovesick daughter—Papa, Richard and I are truly two souls with but a single thought.

"Well, my child, don't be discouraged; that's one more than your mother and I had when we were married."—Boston Transcript.

"There should be in every family a strong, dominating personality."

"Trut, but we can't all afford to keep a cook."—Toledo Blade.

"If I take the place, mister, kin I eat with the family?"

"Eat with the family?" exclaimed Mr. Suburban. "My good woman, we'll give a dinner in your honor every week."

Rich Uncle—The simplest joys are the best. The pleasantest way to spend a Saturday night is sitting in a bath-tub with the water up to your chin, thinking about the money you have in the bank.

Poor Nipper—Well, I have got the bathtub, the chin, and the water, so all I lack is the money.

"I believe," said the cheery philosopher, "that for every single thing you give away two come back to you."

"That's my experience," agreed Phambley. "Last March I gave away my daughter, and she and her husband came back in August."

"That long-haired, round-shouldered feller going by on the other side of the street has a collection of 8927 different specimens of moths and butterflies, and is adding to it right along," proudly said the landlady of the Petunia tavern.

"Indeed, returned the dyspeptic looking guest. 'And what does his wife do to support the family?'"

Kansas City Star.

Mrs. Newrich (to small son)—James have you whispered today, without permission?

James—Only wunst.

Mrs. Newrich (to nurse)—Jane, should James have said 'wunst'?

Jane—No, ma'am, he should have said 'twice!'

## QUEEN'S DEGREE BASIS FOR SUIT

Atlanta, Ga., Dec. 24.—A dark room filled with strange people, a white-clothed altar, on which grotesquely and weirdly glimmered a mystic sword, a woman stooping to kiss the altar cloth, a smack, an explosion, the smell of burning cloth and a shriek in the night.

All this proved to be material for a \$20,000 suit filed against the Modern Order of Praetorians by Mrs. Mexia Osborn, 20, and pretty who alleges she sustained permanent injuries from what would have been a perfectly good initiation had not the "slapperitis," a paddle-like instrument, been applied the wrong way.

Exploded Wrong Way.

But it was applied the wrong way. Mrs. Osborn alleges, and, being thus applied, a blank cartridge was exploded into the person of the young woman, who sustained powder burns, spine affection and shock to say nothing of a ruined dress and a certain amount of humiliation.

The secret workings of the Modern Praetorians will soon be revealed in court, and the damaging "slapperitis" will be brought into plain view for the eyes of all.

The papers in the suit allege that the "slapperitis" is an instrument used in the initiation which Mrs. Osborn was taking on the night of September 9, known as the "Queen's degree," and that it is a paddle-like weapon heavily padded on one side, which is supposed to be the side applied to the person when the "Queen" leans over to kiss the altar or the sword, and the other side is arranged with a board fitted to hinges and containing a blank cartridge, which explodes when the "Queen" is smacked, but, of course, the other way.

The suit alleges that the person whose office is to apply the "slapperitis," which weighs four pounds, negligently applied the wrong side to Mrs. Osborn, with the result that the cartridge exploded into Mrs. Osborn. It is alleged that her clothing caught fire from the explosion, injuring her person, damaging her dress and causing her much humiliation.

The Praetorians have signified their intention of fighting the suit and have employed attorneys for that purpose. They declare that Mrs. Osborn showed no effect of injuries at the time and that she danced until a late hour that night and walked to her home, nearly a mile away from the hall.

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Snoddy—How remarkable.

Sharpie—Yes, he takes most of his rest at night, you know.

WENT ON HONEYMOON—

TOOK HIS WIFE WITH HIM

A writer to a London daily paper, joining in the widespread chorus of public complaints against the inefficiency of the government telephone service, relates the following perfrom his honeymoon he was greatly astonished to receive a statement from the Post Office requiring payment for calls made from his telephone during his absence. He declared that the house had been closed and even confided why he had been away, whereupon the official after due deliberation, suggested:

"Could it not be your wife who had been using the phone in your absence?" It was only after the writer had carefully explained that he had taken the precaution to have his wife with him on his honeymoon that the calls were finally canceled.

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"Indeed, returned the dyspeptic looking guest. 'And what does his wife do to support the family?'"

Kansas City Star.

Mrs. Newrich (to small son)—James have you whispered today, without permission?

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